

# **Paul Cuffee School**

## **Minutes of the Board of Trustees Annual Meeting**

**June 16, 2011**

**The annual meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Paul Cuffee School was held on June 16, 2011 at the Paul Cuffee Elementary School in Providence, Rhode Island.**

**Present: Su Almeida, David Burnham, Russell Carey, William Clifton, Joan Cannady Countryman, Stefano Crema, Robert Kelley, Keith S. Mathews, Maria Monteiro, Joop Nagtegaal, Martha Newcomb, Leanne Nyahkoon, Dorothy Patrick, Carolyn Pemberton, Sarah Reis, Ana-Cecilia Rosado, Earl Smith III, Babak Taleghani.**

**Excused: Kathleen Alvarez, John Cariati, Allyn Copp, Dorothy L. Fields.**

**Paul Cuffee Staff Present: Jonathan Conklin, Becky Coustan, Nina Giannotti, Julia Karahalidis, Michael Obel-Omia, Nell Sears.**

**The meeting was called to order at 6:20 p.m. with a moment of silence. President Joop Nagtegaal began by welcoming everyone to the Annual Meeting of the Board of Trustees. He noted that it remains an interesting time in Rhode Island from an education perspective, with many issues being currently debated.**

## **Approval of Minutes**

**The minutes of the May 19, 2011 meeting of the Board were approved unanimously with corrections noted. The motion to approve was made by Martha Newcomb and seconded by Joan Countryman.**

## **Head of School Report**

**Mr. Obel-Omia reviewed several items from his report, circulated to the Board in advance of the meeting. He noted that a great deal of hiring activity is taking place, especially with regard to the staff for the tenth grade. A number of end of the year activities and events were reviewed, including field trips, fireside chats with faculty, and climate change awareness day at the middle school. Planning is underway for summer academy to be held the first week of August, as well as partnership efforts with other schools and institutions to share and develop best practices in teaching and instruction. Julia Karahalidis provided a brief update on the Annual Fund, announcing that the goal of \$120,000 has been exceeded and that participation across all groups has increased, including faculty participation which grew from 55% to 70%. Finally, Mr. Obel-Omia reported that Nina Giannotti will be leaving the school at the end of this week and thanked her for her tremendous service. Judge Clifton moved that the Board adopt a resolution of appreciation for Ms. Giannotti, which was seconded by Joan Countryman and approved unanimously with applause. There were questions for Michael and discussion among**

**the Board.**

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Human Resources Committee**

**Carolyn Pemberton delivered the report of the Human Resources Committee. She reviewed several highlights from the written report which had been circulated in advance, including the approval and implementation of a salary step increase, approval of an employee conduct policy with respect to students and families, and committee discussion of performance improvement. Discussions are taking place regarding teacher evaluation processes, however the School is also awaiting guidance on this topic from RIDE. She answered questions from members of the Board on several topics.**

### **By-Laws Committee**

**Martha Newcomb moved, on recommendation of the By-Laws Committee, that the name of the Nominating Committee be changed to the Committee on Trusteeship & Governance. Dorothy Patrick seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.**

### **Committee on Trusteeship & Governance**

**Joan Countryman delivered the report of the Committee. She moved**

that the Board elect two new members: Alex Molina and Tom Chen. The motion was seconded by Ana-Cecilia Rosado and approved unanimously.

## **Executive Committee**

Joop Nagtegaal delivered the report of the Executive Committee. He reviewed the Head of School evaluation process which had been followed and completed this year. He reported that the Executive Committee looks forward to many successful continued years of Michael's leadership. He noted that this has been a challenging year with multiple demands of external entities and issues. Michael has been effective at making connections and outreach to the community, which is to the benefit of the school. He also noted the demands of three school locations, and thanked Becky for her great work in launching the high school and Nell and Suzy for their hard work and the impressive results this year on the NECAP assessments. For the coming year, there will need to be a focus by the Head of School on educational issues, progress on strategic and financial planning, and likely less on external outreach. The Executive Committee looks forward to another excellent year, and thanked the staff for all of their work and accomplishments this year. The Board joined in applauding the staff for their work and leadership.

## **New Business**

**Joop Nagtegaal reviewed the calendar of Board of Trustee Meetings for the 2011-2012 school year. He then led the Board in thanking outgoing Trustees for their service to the School: Joan Countryman, Judge Clifton, Katie Alvarez and Sarah Reis. Each member was presented with a gift of appreciation and a book in their honor which will be placed in the school library.**

### **Adjournment**

**Carolyn Pemberton moved to adjourn. Su Almeida seconded. The meeting adjourned at 7:40 pm.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Russell C. Carey, Clerk**